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TWO ALGONQUIN LEGENDS.

THE LOON AND THE KA-KAKÈ.

IN August last the writer visited St. Peter's Reserve, which is on the Red River of the North, midway between the city of Winnipeg and the lake of that name. This is the chief Cree settlement in Manitoba. Mrs. Muckle, wife of Major Muckle, government agent, conducted our party a mile or more by boat upon the beautiful creek that runs through the reserve, until, landing on the bank, we passed up through a vegetable garden to the comfortable little house of Counsellor John Prince, whose Indian name is *I-and-way-nay*, or Thunderbolt. He was not at home, but his excellent wife, an old squaw of good features and finely formed hands and feet, received us. The next day the old pair paddled up in a birch bark to the agent's house. The counsellor was the ideal of a handsome native, as he stood smiling before us in his official blue-cloth coat with brass buttons and silver medal. He was fully six feet in his moccasins, with features remarkably like those of the late Canadian premier, Sir John Macdonald. His hair fell loose and curling to his shoulders. He was affable and polite, — a fine representative of the Cree nation after contact for two generations with Christian civilization. He could speak little English, but Mrs. Muckle was an excellent interpreter. He was grandson of Pegwis, — a renowned warrior in his youth, who became a Christian in the days when the Hudson Bay Company was in possession, and he had proved ever a steadfast friend of the white settlers. We had heard of the important influence that chief had used in shielding the land, now forming the province of Manitoba, from attacks of the Sioux, and asked our visitor to tell us what he could of the relations between Pegwis and the Sioux. As this relates to matters of common interest to dwellers on both sides of the national boundary line, we give his tale in brief, and these two legends he related, which we obtained with the aid of our kind hostess as interpreter. He said: "I was never on the war-path myself, but heard of the Sioux massacres in Minnesota, and of the many fights between my people and that nation in early days, before peace was made. I always thought the Sioux were foolish for fighting the whites. Some of them came here from Minnesota and Dakota, and called on Pegwis, my grandfather. He was displeased with them, though they came to smoke the pipe of peace. The Sioux are sly as foxes and cruel as wolves. Pegwis felt this from the first. Wah-ni-tii smoked with him before the Scotch settlers came. Wah-ni-tii was good to the whites, and had English medals; but soon after he killed all the Saulteaux on the plains he could catch. The

next generation of Sioux were worse ; ten of them came from the States to see Pegwis at St. Peter's, and pretended to regret having killed the Americans. One of them was the bad chief called Little Crow, who had gathered up the bands and made the attacks in Minnesota. My grandfather was annoyed and angry at them, and died during a visit of these Sioux. He had heart-trouble. Little Crow was soon after shot and killed by a Mr. Lampson. The last advice Pegwis gave me was to be always friendly with the whites." Being asked to tell us some folk-tales of the Crees, *I-and-way-nay* lit his pipe, smoked for a while, and with much gesticulation and smiling animation related the following : —

The Loon.

Wesa-Katch-ack, or, as the Plain Crees call him, *Neni-boo-su*,¹ gave a feast, inviting all the birds. He told them he would sing them a song, and they were to shut their eyes and dance round him, each also to turn round as he moved. As they did so, *Wesa-Katch-ack* caught each bird, one by one, twisted his neck and threw it behind him. The Loon noticed that the circle was getting smaller, and kept his eyes open. As he got to the tent door, he cried out : " My brothers, run ; he is killing you all ! " *Wesa-Katch-ack*, hearing this, ran and kicked him behind, and thus injured him and spoiled the graceful shape of his legs, so he still as he moves drags them behind him.

The Ka-Kakè.

There was once a great chief who lived beside Kischegumee, the great water. He and his wife abode peacefully, with an only son and two daughters, who were just growing up into beautiful women. These girls attracted so much attention and admiration that their parents were afraid that some day lovers would carry them off. To prevent this, the mother took them in her canoe, with provisions to last a long time, and left them on an island so far away she thought no one could find them. *Ka-kakè*, the fish-hawk, in one of his excursions, saw these maidens on the lonely island ; for he could fly faster and farther than any of his mates. He visited them, and, falling in love with one of them, began to consider how he should release them from their imprisonment. He could not take one away and leave the other alone ; but he told them of a friend of his, who wore magic moccasins and had a wonderful sword which never failed him, whatever he tried to do with it. The girls said that if *Ka-kakè* would bring his friend, they would get married and

¹ The name given to this mythical demigod from Lake Winnipeg to Hudson's Bay is *Wesa-Katch-ack*, while along the Red River, and from it to the Rocky Mountains, the Plain Crees call him *Neni-boo-su*.

go with Ka-kakè and his friend to their wigwams. Away flew Ka-kakè and told his friend, who was only too glad, for he had heard of these charming maidens, of their beauty and sweet disposition. Ka-kakè undertook to guide his friend to the island, and they started together. His friend was wise and powerful, and his magic moccasins took him as quick as thought. He must take his magic sword ; for when his father had left it to him, he told him never to part with it nor let any one use it or touch it, or the charm would be broken.

About half way the friend flew quickly, like a partridge, rising sometimes far ahead of Ka-kakè, who, when he became weary, would think of his love on the island, and that would give him fresh strength.

"Are you tired?" Ka-kakè's friend would ask him, and he would answer: "Yes, but I will not give up." As they neared the island, Ka-kakè caught up to his friend, but so dead tired that his friend landed first.

He found that Ka-kakè had not told him half how beautiful and charming the maidens were, and he determined to have one of them for his wife. He had a sister, of whom he was very fond, and who loved him dearly, and he said: "I will go and tell my sister that we are coming with our brides." While he went to see his sister, the chief's wife, the mother of the girls heard of their marriage, and forgiving her daughters, she set about to prepare a great marriage-feast. Ka-kakè's friend found his sister, and told her of his marriage, asking her for the sake of her love of him to receive his bride kindly and treat her like a sister. When he returned to the island, the four made preparations for starting on their journey. They told their brides to step in their footsteps, planting each foot in the print of her husband's moccasin till they reached the shore, and then to hold on to what he gave her, and she would fly through the air with him. They soon arrived in their own country. Coo-Coo-hoo, the owl, saw them and envied Ka-kakè and his lovely bride. The owl and the raven stood apart and would not join in the welcome. To provide abundance of meat, Ka-kakè's friend proposed that they should have a hunt, and the crow called out to announce the gathering. Ka-kakè's friend said to him: "You go to the west and I will go the east, and then we will meet and drive the moose before us." In a short time they had the moose in a circle, and the friend took his sword and struck off the heads of the moose and partridges. No wonder he loved his sword, for it gave him food for all his tribe.

Mudjekewis, the west-wind, was asked to call the young men of the tribe to gather in the meat from the woods, but the raven was not asked to come. Mudjekewis was calling, "O-ho-o-o-ho-o, come,

for the chief's son-in-law has plenty of food," and all the young men went to bring it in for the marriage-feast. Ka-kakè went to show where the moose lay, for his friend went so fast on his magic moc-casins that the young men could not keep up with him. When they arrived at the spot they saw that the moose were not shot, but all their heads were cut off, and there was enough of meat to fill every tent. The owl and the raven were ashamed that they had not gone to help in the hunt. The chief's wife talked with her daughters, asking how so many had been killed. Through politeness she did not speak to her son-in-law. Ka-kakè's friend told his wife never to touch his sword, and, being a good wife, she kept her word. The sister of Ka-kakè's friend was lonely and felt deserted; she sat in her tepee far away and wept till she could not see; so her brother said: "We will go and see my poor sister." He left Ka-kakè with instructions to take care of those left behind, and started with his bride and her brother. He told her to plant her feet in his foot-prints, and they went very fast.

When near his sister's wigwam he left his wife and hurried forward to see his sister. Her eyes were blind and her beauty was spoiled with weeping. Coming to the wigwam, he stooped to look in, and said: "My sister, I have come!" Now the birds had been mocking her, telling her many times that her brother had come, and she did not believe that it was really her brother's voice. So she answered: "*Muché animoös!* bad dog, is this the way you cheat me?" He said, softly: "It is true, my sister; I am here." She lifted her eyes, saw him, and was glad. He took medicinal earth and rubbed her eyes and face with it, when her sight and beauty returned. He said: "Arise, my sister, and set your wigwam in order, for my wife is coming." As she did so, he went and brought his wife and her brother. The brother was so pleased that he fell in love with the lovely girl, and she became his wife.

They returned to the chief's tent, and all lived happily.

The raven is worth nothing at all, either for food or anything else; yet he was very envious, and followed them, crying, "Caw! caw! caw!" and he is still complaining and crying wherever he goes. The owl loved Ka-kakè's bride and still cries for her. He is such a tale-bearer that he never ceases to tell how Ka-kakè stole his wife from the island. He sits by himself and cries all night long, "O-hoo-coo-hoo-ho-hoo!"

J. C. Hamilton.